

**From:** COakley@aol.com@inetgw  
**To:** Microsoft ATR  
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**Subject:** Microsoft settlement

Personally, as one who has been in the computer industry since the days of the Apple II, I feel that Microsoft has done far more to aid the computer industry and this economy than it has ever done to harm it. I remember all too well the days of the "tower of babel" because of this or that small company attempting to develop some form of proprietary software... Apple, in many ways, still is a closed system. But, as there was a finding of monopolistic practices, let the federal case stand.

From where I sit, it appears as though the states are simply looking for a revenue source for their own uses and have less interest in "justice" than in seeing how deep Microsoft's pockets can be... If there were monopolistic practices engaged in, it is the consumer and private business who took the hits... and I don't hear anybody talking about helping out the actual injured parties (assuming that there really are any) in this case.

Furthermore, while Apple makes a decent product, I find it fascinating that, in the imaginary name of "competition", our students are being taught using computers that hold a relatively small place in the overall population of desktop systems installed in home, government and workplace environments. The states apparently desire to believe that allowing Microsoft to actually put state of the art systems in the schools would further displace Apple... so, rather than focus on what is actually the right thing to do for the education system and the citizenry served by it, they would prefer to keep us safe from Microsoft and pocket the money instead (... kinda' reminds me of all the states who legalized lotteries and "riverboat" gambling under the pretext of it helping the education system and then failed to inform that, while the funds may actually be applied to schools, the existing school budgets would be offset by all or a portion of those proceeds raised by "legal gambling"....

Further, I find two great ironies in the whole Microsoft case: 1:) Microsoft became a monopoly because of government contacting and purchasing practices (I worked as a contractor and had some familiarity with the procedures) in the first place, while the government was not the sole reason for this, their demand for the interconnectivity of the Microsoft products and the standards provided were key to the demand made for the product... 2:) The original impetus for the case was brought by AOL and Netscape.... two who have become one and a veritable monopoly in their own right...

So... needless to say... my opinion is, make the original federal settlement binding on all states.

Thank you for your time...

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